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STEPHEN D. COAN
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Heads of Fire Departments

FROM: Stephen D. Coan
State Fire Marshal

DATE: August 1, 2009

SUBJECT: Reporting of School Fires

“An Act Relative to the Reporting of Fires in Schools” was signed into law by Governor Romney on May 12, 2006. The law (Chapter 80 of the Acts of 2006) became effective on August 10, 2006. I am re-issuing this information for your use as we approach the new school year.

This law requires that the principal of any public or private school of grades 1-12 shall file a written report to the local fire department within 24 hours of any incident of unauthorized ignition of any fire within the school building, or on its grounds. The principal must file this report whether or not the fire department responded. The fire department shall report the incident to the Marshal pursuant to Chapter 148 § 2 (MFIRS).

The law was created to mandate that schools report fires that may have previously gone unreported. The effect will be greater protection of our children and the ability to identify possible juvenile fire setters to provide appropriate early intervention.

I have included the form with this advisory. In addition, I have included an informational flyer that can be used to highlight fire code regulations and a multi-page document of specific regulations governing schools. I would encourage discussions with your schools prior to the start of the school year.

If you have any questions please contact our Public Education Unit at 978-567-3380 or Code Compliance and Enforcement Unit at 978-567-3375 or in Western MA 413-587-3181.

SDC/bhs